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SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE AND IPA; NSC FOR SHAPIRO/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/02/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KWBG](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: PALESTINIAN RECONCILIATION: FATAH-HAMAS TALKS  
PROCEEDING WITHOUT MINOR FACTIONS

REF: A. JERUSALEM 575

[B](#). JERUSALEM 528

[C](#). JERUSALEM 476

[D](#). JERUSALEM 465

[E](#). JERUSALEM 359

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Fatah and Hamas delegations held more than six hours of discussions in Cairo on the opening day of a second round of reconciliation talks April 1. Their discussions focused on Hamas' proposal to create an interim PLO body. Senior Fatah officials said Hamas' positions have not changed, and predicted the latest round of talks would not achieve a positive outcome. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Ahmad Soboh, a former adviser to PA President Abbas, and Fatah Revolutionary Council member Jibril Rijoub told Polspec on April 1 that Fatah and Hamas delegations held more than six hours of discussions focused on a Hamas demand to create an interim PLO body in preparation for elections to the Palestine National Council (PNC). A meeting of the steering committee to address other unresolved issues remaining from lower-level committees was deferred. They said that talks were "intense" but that Hamas had not changed its position from the previous round, continuing to demand an interim PLO body that would effectively replace the PLO Executive Committee until new PNC elections are held.

[1](#)3. (C) Fatah insists that any new committee have a purely advisory role. Soboh and Rijoub predicted that this round of talks would either fail completely, or result in a vague understanding that could not be implemented. Talks on PLO restructuring are slated to continue on April 2, with the Egyptian sponsors planning to address outstanding issues consecutively, not simultaneously.

[1](#)4. (C) Soboh said that several small factions were upset at the Egyptian decision to delay inviting other PLO factions to the talks. Fatah delegate Nabil Shaath said publicly that talks between Hamas and Fatah would last one week, after which other factions would be invited to join. Soboh and Rijoub said minor factions would not be invited unless and until there are breakthroughs between Hamas and Fatah.

WALLES